Ensuring Reproductive Rights and Choices for all

POTENTIAL

Annual Report 2018
Sri Lanka
PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SRI LANKA

Unnatural Deaths of Women & Girls: The First Study of its kind in Sri Lanka  page 12
Canada Grants CDN $900,000 to UNFPA  page 13
UNFPA & British High Commission: Addressing Sexual & Gender-based Violence in Sri Lanka  page 13
Collaborative Action to End Gender-based Violence in Sri Lanka  page 14
Women’s Rights are Human Rights  page 15
Celebrating International Women’s Day  page 16
Film Screening: Anatomy of Violence  page 18
Strengthening Gender Focused Corporate Culture at MAS Holdings  page 19
Jayanthi: Protecting women, fighting inequalities  page 20
Making Public Transport Safer for Women and Girls  page 23
  • HackaDev: National Youth Social Innovation Challenge
  • Engaging media to address sexual harassment in public transport
  • Orange the World: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence
  • Don’t Look Away: 16 Days, 16 Stories of Sexual Harassment in Public Transport

ENSURING ACCESS TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

The path to sustainability  page 32
Sri Lanka joins FP2020  page 33
Love & Peace: Empowering the Next Generation  page 34
  • UNFPA at Yowunpuraya
  • UNFPA at the Inter-university Gender Festival
  • Youth4Youth: A Safe Space for Young People
Ashley Judd on sexual and reproductive health  page 36
Embracing Diversity and Promoting Gender Equality  page 38
The Montage of Sexuality  page 39
Everything you need to know about Menopause  page 39
World AIDS Day: Know Your Status  page 39
Generation-to-Generation Dialogue on Comprehensive Sexuality Education  page 40
Breaking the stigma on Menstruation  page 41
UNFPA & WFP join Hands to Address Reproductive Health needs of Women  page 42
Visit to the Central Province  page 43

ADVOCATING FOR POLICIES BASED ON POPULATION DATA

SDG Data LK: Enhancing Data for Sustainable Development  page 46
Is Sri Lanka’s Health System Ready to Face the Population Shift?  page 50
Is Sri Lanka growing old before it grows rich?  page 51
The Power of Choice: State of World Population 2018  page 52
The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the United Nations Sexual and Reproductive Health Agency.

Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.

In Sri Lanka we deliver this mandate based on principles of human rights and gender equality by advocating for rights-based gender responsive and transformative policies that enable the full realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights is our key priority.

- When women and girls live a life free from violence, they can fully realize and exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights
- When young people have access to accurate information and services on sexual and reproductive health, they can make informed decisions about their bodies and lives
- When population dynamics, shaped by people’s sexual and reproductive health and choices, are used to inform policies, we can reach those furthest behind
The year 2018 marks the beginning of the 9th country programme cycle in Sri Lanka. As the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, UNFPA strives to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.

In 2018, UNFPA launched efforts to achieve three transformative results; ambitions that promise to change the world for every person. This includes ending unmet need for family planning, ending preventable maternal death and ending gender-based violence and harmful practices.

The 2030 agenda for sustainable development recognizes reproductive health and rights as integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. With a number of high-level engagements, 2018 has been a busy year for our office in taking this agenda forward.

As the lead UN agency driving data for strengthened policies and decision-making in Sri Lanka, UNFPA was part of the first National Symposium on Data for the Sustainable Development Goals – a joint partnership with the Government of Sri Lanka and the wider UN.

The year 2018 has also seen a number of innovative partnerships. We have engaged with young people to talk about topics such as menstruation, to break stigma and raise awareness on eco-friendly menstrual hygiene products. During the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, UNFPA globally focused its attention on sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka. This campaign featured real stories of women and girls who have faced sexual harassment in public buses and trains in the country. With continuous discussion and engagement, we look forward to making this issue a national priority where women and girls can take public transport without fear or intimidation.

This annual report shows how UNFPA, during 2018, has helped Sri Lankan youth, women and girls to make free and informed choices about their bodies and lives.

For nearly 50 years, UNFPA has been supporting the Government of Sri Lanka in ensuring reproductive health and rights for all. When women and girls have access to accurate information and services on sexual and reproductive health, they can live a life free from violence and fully exercise their reproductive rights and choices.

We appreciate the support of all our partners, including the Government of Sri Lanka, development partners, Civil Society Organizations and our sister UN agencies in achieving this shared goal.

Ritsu Nacken
Representative, UNFPA Sri Lanka

Ms. Nacken, a Japanese national, has been in the UN system for over 15 years, holding positions in New York, Fiji, Italy, Ethiopia, and Viet Nam prior to joining UNFPA Sri Lanka in February 2017.
Violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent human-rights violations in the world. When women and girls experience violence, it can affect their sexual and reproductive health choices as well as their educational, economic and political empowerment.

UNFPA is a co-chair of the National Forum against Gender-based Violence and works with a range of partners including the Government of Sri Lanka and the private sector to strengthen public institutions and national policies to prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence.
In addition, UNFPA also presented a policy brief on the ‘Reportage of Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls in Sri Lankan Newspapers’. The policy brief explored ways in which media reportage of the issue breaches ethical guidelines on reporting; further highlighting the importance of sensitive and responsible reportage by the media.

Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls: The First Study of its Kind in Sri Lanka

UNFPA and the University of Kelaniya launched a policy brief to understand the contributory factors of ‘unnatural deaths’ in five provinces in the country.

Out of the 243 homicides reviewed in the study, 128 of the cases identified the perpetrator as the legal husband. At the end of the 3-year study, it was also found that only 30% of the homicide cases had reached the High Court; while the average time period for conclusion of cases is 3 years from the time a case is filed.

In light of this, the study aims to describe and provide policy inputs to address problems associated with the judicial processes and outcomes relating to unnatural female deaths.

What is an ‘Unnatural Death?’:
An unnatural death occurs as a result of external causes such as injury, trauma or poisoning where the manner or circumstance could be homicidal, suicidal or accidental, or at times even not determined.

In addition, UNFPA also presented a policy brief on the ‘Reportage of Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls in Sri Lankan Newspapers’. The policy brief explored ways in which media reportage of the issue breaches ethical guidelines on reporting; further highlighting the importance of sensitive and responsible reportage by the media.

Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls: The First Study of its Kind in Sri Lanka


Reportage of Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls in Sri Lankan Newspapers:
https://bit.ly/2Eh9S49

Canada grants CDN $900,000 to UNFPA

The grant provided by Canada to UNFPA Sri Lanka will support in addressing sexual and gender-based violence through public institutions. This grant to UNFPA is part of Canada’s CDN $650 million comprehensive approach to address gaps in funding sexual and reproductive health and rights globally, and is a continuation of Canadian support in Sri Lanka for women’s empowerment, political participation, and ending gender-based violence in line with their Feminist International Assistance Policy.

UNFPA & British High Commission: Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

The British High Commission of Colombo joins hands with UNFPA to support in delivering ‘essential services’ for victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. The 1 year project is valued at GBP 25,000.

The grant provided by Canada to UNFPA Sri Lanka will support in addressing sexual and gender-based violence through public institutions. This grant to UNFPA is part of Canada’s CDN $650 million comprehensive approach to address gaps in funding sexual and reproductive health and rights globally, and is a continuation of Canadian support in Sri Lanka for women’s empowerment, political participation, and ending gender-based violence in line with their Feminist International Assistance Policy.
UNFPA together with the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka, inaugurated a two-day workshop, on multi-sectoral services responding to women and girls subject to violence.

When essential services are well-coordinated, quality assured and confidential, women and girls who have experienced violence can get the support they need to recover from its effects, break the cycle of violence and strengthen prevention measures.

The workshop provided stakeholders an opportunity to adopt a collaborative and multi-sectoral approach in providing these essential services. In guiding this effort, the ‘Essential Services Package for Women and Girls subject to Violence’ was introduced at the workshop.

Over 200 participants, representing a wide cross section of agencies including Government ministries and departments, frontline service providers, UN agencies, CSOs and NGOs, actively engaged in the workshop featuring local and international resource personnel.

In 2017, the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka provided a grant to UNFPA for the delivery of the project, ‘Addressing Sexual and Gender-based Violence through Public Institutions’.

Public Sector Officials are key in ensuring that all women and girls subject to violence, receive the care, support and justice they are entitled to, as citizens of Sri Lanka.

As part of the project, UNFPA together with the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka, the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and the Human Rights Commission, conducted a series of workshops for public sector officials on women’s rights, sexual and gender based violence and reproductive health.

The workshops, titled ‘Women’s Rights are Human Rights’ were conducted in Ampara, Anuradhapura, Vavuniya and Colombo for 85 national and sub national officers from the Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid Commission and Public Services Commission. The workshops focused on how public sector officials can better incorporate principles of gender equality in their work.

Participants have begun conducting their own knowledge sharing sessions ensuring that the messages and insights gained through these workshops does not stop at its culmination, but contributes to a movement in the way public sector officials approach their work.


WOMEN’S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

UNFPA together with the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs conducted a series of workshops for public sector officials on women’s rights, sexual and gender based violence and reproductive health.

The workshop, titled ‘Women’s Rights are Human Rights’ was conducted in Ampara, Anuradhapura, Vavuniya and Colombo for 85 national and sub national officials from the Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid Commission and Public Services Commission. The workshops focused on how public sector officials can better incorporate principles of gender equality in their work.

Participants have begun conducting their own knowledge sharing sessions ensuring that the messages and insights gained through these workshops do not stop at its culmination, but contributes to a movement in the way public sector officials approach their work.

At the National Women’s Day walk, UNFPA walked in unison with over 1,000 people, commemorating strong women such as Late Una McCauley - the first female Resident Coordinator at the United Nations in Sri Lanka.
UNFPA in Sri Lanka together with the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka and the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS) co-hosted a film screening of ‘Anatomy of Violence’ - a Canadian drama that explores the root causes leading up to the 2012 gang rape incident in Delhi. The film screening was followed by a panel discussion with academy award nominated Director Deepa Mehta and theatre artist, Dr. Neelam Chowdhry.

The film was also screened at the Jaffna Film Festival with support from the High Commission of Canada to increase awareness about gender-based violence.

In 2017, UNFPA signed an MOU with MAS Holdings to deliver a one-year project to shift corporate culture within the organization by increasing awareness among employees on gender-equitable structures.

The project was successfully completed in 2018, reaching out to over 20,000 employees in five of MAS’ apparel manufacturing plants: Leisureline, Slimline, Bodyline, Linea Aqua, and Silueta.

The programme centralized around developing resource material and training of trainers to conduct awareness-raising sessions on gender-based violence and on the principles of gender-equality within the organization.

At the end of the one-year project, UNFPA had trained 22 MAS officers. These officers are now in-house resource personnel that have the knowledge, skills and tools to conduct sessions for more employees, thereby increasing awareness on gender-based violence and gender-equality. The project was designed as a sustainable model to ensure that while UNFPA technical support phases out, MAS can continue to train its employees through the in-house resource personnel, thereby scaling up the programme to reach all employees and promote equitable structures within the organization.

https://bit.ly/2I5i7Ce

In 2017, UNFPA in Sri Lanka together with the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka and the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS) co-hosted a film screening of ‘Anatomy of Violence’ - a Canadian drama that explores the root causes leading up to the 2012 gang rape incident in Delhi. The film screening was followed by a panel discussion with academy award nominated Director Deepa Mehta and theatre artist, Dr. Neelam Chowdhry.

The film was also screened at the Jaffna Film Festival with support from the High Commission of Canada to increase awareness about gender-based violence.

In 2017, UNFPA signed an MOU with MAS Holdings to deliver a one-year project to shift corporate culture within the organization by increasing awareness among employees on gender-equitable structures.

The project was successfully completed in 2018, reaching out to over 20,000 employees in five of MAS’ apparel manufacturing plants: Leisureline, Slimline, Bodyline, Linea Aqua, and Silueta.

The programme centralized around developing resource material and training of trainers to conduct awareness-raising sessions on gender-based violence and on the principles of gender-equality within the organization.

At the end of the one-year project, UNFPA had trained 22 MAS officers. These officers are now in-house resource personnel that have the knowledge, skills and tools to conduct sessions for more employees, thereby increasing awareness on gender-based violence and gender-equality. The project was designed as a sustainable model to ensure that while UNFPA technical support phases out, MAS can continue to train its employees through the in-house resource personnel, thereby scaling up the programme to reach all employees and promote equitable structures within the organization.

https://bit.ly/2I5i7Ce

UNFPA in Sri Lanka together with the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka and the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS) co-hosted a film screening of ‘Anatomy of Violence’ - a Canadian drama that explores the root causes leading up to the 2012 gang rape incident in Delhi. The film screening was followed by a panel discussion with academy award nominated Director Deepa Mehta and theatre artist, Dr. Neelam Chowdhry.

The film was also screened at the Jaffna Film Festival with support from the High Commission of Canada to increase awareness about gender-based violence.

In 2017, UNFPA signed an MOU with MAS Holdings to deliver a one-year project to shift corporate culture within the organization by increasing awareness among employees on gender-equitable structures.

The project was successfully completed in 2018, reaching out to over 20,000 employees in five of MAS’ apparel manufacturing plants: Leisureline, Slimline, Bodyline, Linea Aqua, and Silueta.

The programme centralized around developing resource material and training of trainers to conduct awareness-raising sessions on gender-based violence and on the principles of gender-equality within the organization.

At the end of the one-year project, UNFPA had trained 22 MAS officers. These officers are now in-house resource personnel that have the knowledge, skills and tools to conduct sessions for more employees, thereby increasing awareness on gender-based violence and gender-equality. The project was designed as a sustainable model to ensure that while UNFPA technical support phases out, MAS can continue to train its employees through the in-house resource personnel, thereby scaling up the programme to reach all employees and promote equitable structures within the organization.

https://bit.ly/2I5i7Ce

In 2017, UNFPA signed an MOU with MAS Holdings to deliver a one-year project to shift corporate culture within the organization by increasing awareness among employees on gender-equitable structures.

The project was successfully completed in 2018, reaching out to over 20,000 employees in five of MAS’ apparel manufacturing plants: Leisureline, Slimline, Bodyline, Linea Aqua, and Silueta.

The programme centralized around developing resource material and training of trainers to conduct awareness-raising sessions on gender-based violence and on the principles of gender-equality within the organization.

At the end of the one-year project, UNFPA had trained 22 MAS officers. These officers are now in-house resource personnel that have the knowledge, skills and tools to conduct sessions for more employees, thereby increasing awareness on gender-based violence and gender-equality. The project was designed as a sustainable model to ensure that while UNFPA technical support phases out, MAS can continue to train its employees through the in-house resource personnel, thereby scaling up the programme to reach all employees and promote equitable structures within the organization.

https://bit.ly/2I5i7Ce
Jayanthi: Protecting Women, Fighting Inequalities

During a woman’s lifetime, as a girl, as a woman, as a wife, as a mother, she is faced with many challenges solely because of her gender. These are the insightful words of Jayanthi, a professional counsellor at Sri Lanka’s leading apparel company, MAS Holdings.

In Sri Lanka, and in many parts of the world, gender plays a major role in how we are expected to think and behave. If you are a woman, there is a perception that a woman’s life choices should be dictated by her male counterparts. This kind of thinking is largely influenced by our culture and society.

Key issues

Gender stereotypes can result in many inequalities. Jayanthi identifies that these inequalities can perpetuate a culture of violence.

The root cause of violence against women and girls is gender inequality.

According to a study commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 1 in 3 female homicides in Sri Lanka are a result of intimate partner violence. The Demographic and Health Survey (2016) highlights that among women who suffered from domestic violence, only one fourth have sought help. This shows that violence against women and girls is shrouded in a culture of silence.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. It undermines the health, dignity and autonomy of its victims. As a counsellor, Jayanthi explains, “Our past experiences play an important role in how we react to situations as an adult. Violence against women and girls can influence generations". For example, when children are exposed to violence between their parents, because of learned behavior, women and girls tend to accept violence as an inevitable part of life.

This has damaging consequences because victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and even death. The Demographic and Health Survey (2016) shows that domestic violence during pregnancy is a common occurrence in Sri Lanka, which can lead to miscarriages, stillbirths and maternal deaths. There are many stories like this in Sri Lanka, and this is only a glimpse into the scale of the problem of violence against women and girls.

Taking action

With over 95,000 employees, MAS Holdings is the largest private-sector employer of women in Sri Lanka. Recognizing the need to uplift and protect the lives of their female workers, in line with International Women’s Day (2017), MAS Holdings partnered with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Sri Lanka to deliver a one-year project to shift corporate culture within the organization by increasing awareness among employees on gender-equitable structures.

Empowering women and girls

After the one-year programme, UNFPA had reached out to more than 20,000 employees of MAS Holdings to ensure its employees and their families live with respect and dignity. As an active participant in the programme, Jayanthi adds that she and her colleagues learnt more about the legal frameworks protecting women and girls experiencing violence; which they were not previously aware of.

Because of this programme conducted by UNFPA, more women and girls come in for consultations. Some think they deserve to go through such experiences. But now they feel more empowered to speak up, because they know their rights and they know they don’t have to face these problems alone.

Jayanthi is from Homagama, Sri Lanka. She has over 10 years of experience working as a counsellor.

Jayanthi and her colleague participating in forum theatre to highlight gender stereotypes.

UNFPA being one of the leading agencies within the UN system to address and prevent gender-based violence, made a customized programme centralized around developing resource material and training of trainers to conduct awareness raising sessions on gender-based violence and on gender-equality within the organization.
UNFPA was part of ‘HackaDev’: The National Youth Social Innovation Challenge: a joint initiative between the Ministry of Telecommunication, Digital Infrastructure and Foreign Employment (MTDIFE) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Sri Lanka.

For the HackaDev, UNFPA presented a thematic challenge where teams of young people pitched their ideas and solutions under the topic of ‘sexual harassment in public transport’.

At the 5-day social innovation camp, UNFPA mentored the teams to ideate and fine-tune their solutions towards addressing sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka.

Team ‘Tech Ruhuna’ had the winning solution to which the team will receive seed funding and technical support from UNFPA to implement their projects.

UNFPA conducted a media workshop for Sinhala media personnel on making public transport safer for women and girls in Sri Lanka. The workshop engaged local media to foster public discussions and advocate for strengthened response mechanisms on sexual harassment in public transport.

Leading up to the workshop, an invisible theater act was performed inside a travelling bus, engaging over 50 journalists, and giving them an experiential perspective of the issue. The performance showcased many different forms of harassment faced by women and girls in public transport.

Hope for the future
Looking back, Jayanthi realizes how things are gradually changing with time. We now live in a very competitive society. Women contribute equally to the economy as men do. We cannot disregard the value and potential of women. We have to reconsider the role of women as active citizens and strive to create a free and safe environment for women and girls.

Addressing gender inequalities starts with your family. I am a mother of one daughter and I am lucky to have a husband that supports me. After this programme, I went home and spoke about this issue with them. Before, I used to be very protective of my daughter, especially because of the stories I hear. Now, I have realized that I have to give her the freedom and the same opportunities that I would if I had a son. This programme has helped my personal life in many ways. It has helped me realize that I should let my daughter live and experience life without any limitations, and it is my responsibility to teach her about the importance of gender-equality; that men and women should be treated equally, and women and girls should not be discriminated based on their gender. Only then would she be empowered to expand her choices in life and reach her fullest potential.

UNFPA conducted a media workshop for Sinhala media personnel on making public transport safer for women and girls in Sri Lanka. The workshop engaged local media to foster public discussions and advocate for strengthened response mechanisms on sexual harassment in public transport.

90% of women and girls have faced sexual harassment in public transport according to a study done by UNFPA.
Every year, iconic buildings around the world are illuminated in orange during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, a global campaign that starts from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day). Throughout the 16 days, Governments, UN agencies, civil society, and activists come together to raise awareness on this issue that knows no social, economic, or national boundaries.

More than a third of women worldwide have experienced either physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives.

In Sri Lanka, with support from the Colombo Municipal Council, the Town Hall building was lit up in bright orange for 16 days, urging the need to foster a safer environment for women and girls.

#16Days
This year, to mark the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, UNFPA rolled out a global campaign highlighting the issue of sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka. As part of the online campaign, UNFPA teamed up with Eliza Hatch of Cheer Up Luv: a photojournalism series that tells women's stories of sexual harassment in their own words, to amplify the voices of those unheard. The advocacy campaign titled ‘Don’t Look Away’ featured stories of women and girls who have endured sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka.

The global campaign reached over 6 million people from around the world, making it one of UNFPA’s most widespread campaign.

To take the campaign further, UNFPA branded a bus stop in Colombo urging victims and bystanders to intervene, speak up and be the change against sexual harassment in public transport.

During the 16 days, an activation was also carried out in bus stops and the Fort railway station reaching out to conductors, bus drivers and passengers highlighting the importance of speaking up against sexual harassment in public transport.

Read the stories: unfpa.org/16days

"One day, I was travelling home from school with my younger brother and I was in my school uniform. A man was sitting behind me in the bus and he tapped me. When he tapped me, I turned around and looked at him. As soon as I looked at him, he inappropriately exposed a private part of his body. To be honest, I was very young and I cried a lot and walked to the front of the bus. An uncle saw that I was crying and asked me why. When I told him what happened, he asked another passenger who was getting off at the same place to take us home safely. Then that person dropped us home. I got really scared at the time. Since I was really young, I was not sure how to react. I am sharing my experience now, because then hopefully other girls can be vigilant and aware when travelling in public transport. Sri Lanka is a country where many people use public transport. I hope people can understand how they must use public transport when they hear my experience, and I hope the relevant authorities will take necessary action to address this issue when they hear my story.

During the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, UNFPA rolled out a global campaign highlighting the issue of sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka. As part of the online campaign, UNFPA teamed up with Eliza Hatch of Cheer Up Luv: a photojournalism series that tells women's stories of sexual harassment in their own words, to amplify the voices of those unheard. The advocacy campaign titled ‘Don’t Look Away’ featured stories of women and girls who have endured sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka.

The global campaign reached over 6 million people from around the world, making it one of UNFPA’s most widespread campaign.

To take the campaign further, UNFPA branded a bus stop in Colombo urging victims and bystanders to intervene, speak up and be the change against sexual harassment in public transport.

During the 16 days, an activation was also carried out in bus stops and the Fort railway station reaching out to conductors, bus drivers and passengers highlighting the importance of speaking up against sexual harassment in public transport.

Read the stories: unfpa.org/16days

"One day, I was travelling home from school with my younger brother and I was in my school uniform. A man was sitting behind me in the bus and he tapped me. When he tapped me, I turned around and looked at him. As soon as I looked at him, he inappropriately exposed a private part of his body. To be honest, I was very young and I cried a lot and walked to the front of the bus. An uncle saw that I was crying and asked me why. When I told him what happened, he asked another passenger who was getting off at the same place to take us home safely. Then that person dropped us home. I got really scared at the time. Since I was really young, I was not sure how to react. I am sharing my experience now, because then hopefully other girls can be vigilant and aware when travelling in public transport. Sri Lanka is a country where many people use public transport. I hope people can understand how they must use public transport when they hear my experience, and I hope the relevant authorities will take necessary action to address this issue when they hear my story.

During the 16 days, an activation was also carried out in bus stops and the Fort railway station reaching out to conductors, bus drivers and passengers highlighting the importance of speaking up against sexual harassment in public transport.

Read the stories: unfpa.org/16days

"One day, I was travelling home from school with my younger brother and I was in my school uniform. A man was sitting behind me in the bus and he tapped me. When he tapped me, I turned around and looked at him. As soon as I looked at him, he inappropriately exposed a private part of his body. To be honest, I was very young and I cried a lot and walked to the front of the bus. An uncle saw that I was crying and asked me why. When I told him what happened, he asked another passenger who was getting off at the same place to take us home safely. Then that person dropped us home. I got really scared at the time. Since I was really young, I was not sure how to react. I am sharing my experience now, because then hopefully other girls can be vigilant and aware when travelling in public transport. Sri Lanka is a country where many people use public transport. I hope people can understand how they must use public transport when they hear my experience, and I hope the relevant authorities will take necessary action to address this issue when they hear my story.

During the 16 days, an activation was also carried out in bus stops and the Fort railway station reaching out to conductors, bus drivers and passengers highlighting the importance of speaking up against sexual harassment in public transport.
Ensuring Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

More than half of young people in Sri Lanka lack the knowledge required to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Adolescent pregnancy, for example, can lead girls to drop out of school, which prevents girls from exercising their right to education, and poor understanding of gender equality can lead to discrimination and coercion.

As the UN’s sexual and reproductive health agency, UNFPA supports the Government of Sri Lanka and works with a range of local and international partners to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights remain at the core of the Population and Development Agenda.

Source: National Youth Health Survey, 2013

50% of youth in Sri Lanka have limited knowledge about the reproductive organs of the opposite sex.
Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights is a key effort towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the recent past, myths and misconceptions around family planning has triggered communal violence in the country.

There exists a clear need to move away from traditional views of family planning as ‘population control’. Family planning is the means to allow individuals to exercise their rights and expand their choices to freely decide, if, when and how often to have children. This includes access to information, education and the means to do so.

UNFPA’s efforts enable individuals, including young people in Sri Lanka, to develop these skills and acquire the knowledge and support needed to make informed decisions about their bodies and lives; as a result, reaching new milestones which are significantly making changes in the policy landscape of the country.

In 2018, Sri Lanka joined the global movement, FP2020 to address the most challenging barriers to expanding access to family planning in the country. FP2020 is based on the principle that all women should have access to lifesaving contraceptives. Sri Lanka’s objective is to increase the percentage of eligible families, who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods of contraceptives from 74.2% to 79% by 2025, with a focus on reducing regional disparities.

UNFPA is a key partner in the FP2020 global partnership to empower women and girls by investing in rights-based family planning that continuously advocates and works closely with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the country progresses towards the FP2020 commitments.

As a result of using modern methods of contraception, over 1 million unplanned pregnancies in Sri Lanka have been prevented and 403,000 unsafe abortions have been averted.

Source: FP2020 Annual Progress Report 2018
Love & Peace: Empowering the Next Generation

UNFPA together with UN in Sri Lanka participated in Yowunpuraya: ‘City of Youth’ - a 5 day residential youth festival organized by the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs, the National Youth Services Council, and Sri Lanka Youth.

At Yowunpuraya, UNFPA reached out to more than 5,000 young people across the island. Highlighting the importance of love and peace, UNFPA conducted awareness sessions on sexual and reproductive health to equip young people with scientifically accurate information about human development, anatomy, and reproductive health, as well as information about contraception, childbirth and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), such as HIV/AIDS.

UNFPA supported the festival through its own stall ‘Love and Peace’ which had a ‘Love Cinema’ to raise awareness on the importance of comprehensive sexuality education among youth. Students also had the opportunity to complete ‘Road to Adulthood’ - A trilingual e-course for young people to learn about reproductive health and rights. UNFPA also highlighted the importance of inclusive sexuality education, especially among young people with disabilities through the ‘ABLE APP’. The App creates a space for differently abled individuals to obtain information on sexual and reproductive health, considering that there are over 1 million people in Sri Lanka who are differently abled, most being visually impaired.

The recent incidents of communal violence that took place in 2018, particularly in relation to incidents that stemmed from inaccurate information relating to reproductive health, called for action to create a safer space and safer Sri Lanka for all Sri Lankans, including young people.

UNFPA’s 3-year programme ‘Youth4Youth’ created safe spaces for Sri Lankan youth in the Northern, Eastern, Central and Southern Provinces to engage in meaningful discussions around youth participation in community development.

Through the Youth4Youth programme, a National symposium was held with over 100 young people from diverse backgrounds to connect ideas and build communities to nurture lasting peace in Sri Lanka.

The concept of peace should come from our hearts and minds. If all young people commit to work together then we can achieve sustained peace.

Nithushaan, Northern Province, Sri Lanka.

Active youth participation and increased access to accurate information is essential for peaceful and inclusive societies.

The Youth4Youth programme is delivered by UNFPA in partnership with Chrysalis and UN Volunteers. The programme is supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.
ASHLEY JUDD ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

In 2018, Award-winning Hollywood actress, writer, and UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador, Ashley Judd, arrived in Sri Lanka. During her mission, Ashley Judd engaged with women and girls, and stakeholders from the public sector, private sector and donor community to discuss the importance of investing in reproductive health and rights.

Ashley Judd also visited the De Soysa Maternity Hospital, where she engaged with pregnant mothers and newborn babies, and learned more about UNFPA's support in formalizing maternal care guidelines in the country. UNFPA has also supported the Family Health Bureau in the establishment of ‘Mithuru Piyasa’—hospital-based care centers that provide counselling and immediate care for victims of Gender-based Violence (GBV).

In light of UNFPA’s partnership with MAS Holdings, Ashley visited MAS Holding’s UNICHELA garment factory in Panadura. Speaking to empowered women at the factory, she learned how the apparel industry has been a catalyst in enhancing livelihoods of women, their families, communities, and the country as a whole.

Ashley also met with female members of the local film community to share views on how film can be used as a tool to increase awareness on issues relating to GBV, the importance of reproductive health and rights, and sexuality education.

The students were talking about GBV in a non-shaming way that was very safe and really open, and it’s that kind of awareness that creates advocacy and courage. This is what the world needs now.

It’s so important that women talk to one another, because that’s where we get so much of our information. We girls have to group up and talk about our sexual and reproductive health.
Sexuality is an intrinsic part of life and connotes the totality of a human being. Unlike the word ‘sex’ that represents a physiologic act or the categorizations into which human beings are often boxed into; sexuality denotes the most intimate feelings and deepest longings of humans to find sexual expression and meaningful relationships with others and often with their own identities.

The Montage of Sexuality was published by UNFPA and the College of Community Physicians to create a positive dialogue around sexuality in Sri Lanka.

For ageing women, menopause is a significant transition from both a biological and social perspective. Hormonal changes occurring during the menopausal period may lead to adverse effects on the quality of life. The menopause flipchart developed by UNFPA and the Menopause Society of Sri Lanka provides information on effectively managing menopause for a happier and healthy life.

On International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, the UN in Sri Lanka supports the full human rights of all members of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities in Sri Lanka.

On World AIDS Day, UNFPA walked with over 3000 Sri Lankans to raise awareness about HIV testing.
On World Population Day, UNFPA together with the Parliamentary Sectoral Oversight Committee on Women and Gender, and the Ministry of Education hosted UNFPA’s 5th Generation-to-Generation (G2G) dialogue highlighting the need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in Sri Lanka.

The G2G facilitated a discussion on how different stakeholders, with a special emphasis on policymakers and young people can come together to address gaps in comprehensive sexuality education in Sri Lanka, through targeted initiatives and inclusive policies. Over 180 people attended, including government officials, members from civil society as well as young students.

UNFPA is continuing to support the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders to ensure that the agenda to implement Comprehensive Sexuality Education is taken forward in the country.

To mark Menstrual Hygiene Day in Sri Lanka, UNFPA ran a quiz competition on social media where winners received passes to watch the bollywood film ‘Pad Man’ at a special screening.

‘Pad Man’ is a film based on the inspiring life story of Arunchalam Muruganatham, an Indian man who revolutionized the concept of menstrual hygiene by manufacturing low-cost sanitary napkins in India, upon learning that his wife used filthy rags and newspapers during her period. The film explores many important aspects such as gender stereotypes and challenges the social stigma around menstruation.

At the screening, over 100 young people also had the opportunity to learn about three eco-friendly menstrual hygienic products: 1) Candra – a reusable undergarment manufactured by Sri Lankan apparel company Hela Clothing, 2) Me Luna - Menstrual Cups produced in Germany, and 3) Momiji Natural – a reusable cloth-based sanitary napkin locally produced by a female Japanese entrepreneur.
UNFPA Representative, Ritsu Nacken visited the Madolkele Divisional hospital in the Central Province with the Regional Director of Health services to speak about the challenges faced by pregnant mothers in the region.

During her visit, she also met with teenage mothers who have endured sexual and gender-based violence at a shelter for survivors of gender-based violence.

UNFPA and the World Food Programme joined hands to deliver a project in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health. This unique partnership takes a holistic approach to the health and well-being of women and girls in Sri Lanka. The project which is funded by the Government of Denmark will assist communities in 6 districts - Monaragala, Matale, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Batticaloa, and Nuwara Eliya. It aspires to empower women and girls by providing comprehensive information and services on sexual and reproductive health, with a focus on nutrition.

Integrating nutrition into sexual and reproductive health can drive mutually reinforcing health outcomes for women and girls in Sri Lanka. By doing so, we can achieve healthier pregnancies and birth outcomes, end maternal deaths and reduce reproductive and maternal health risks.

UNFPA & WFP JOIN HANDS TO ADDRESS REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH NEEDS OF WOMEN

UNFPA and the World Food Programme joined hands to deliver a project in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health. This unique partnership takes a holistic approach to the health and well-being of women and girls in Sri Lanka. The project which is funded by the Government of Denmark will assist communities in 6 districts - Monaragala, Matale, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Batticaloa, and Nuwara Eliya. It aspires to empower women and girls by providing comprehensive information and services on sexual and reproductive health, with a focus on nutrition.

Integrating nutrition into sexual and reproductive health can drive mutually reinforcing health outcomes for women and girls in Sri Lanka. By doing so, we can achieve healthier pregnancies and birth outcomes, end maternal deaths and reduce reproductive and maternal health risks.

35% married women are not using contraception.

Teenage pregnancies are at a rate of 4.8% with subnational disparities of 5–8%.

Source: Demographic and Health Survey, 2016
Advocating for policies based on population data

Without accurate data, policymakers cannot be prepared to address challenges and harness opportunities of emerging population trends. UNFPA is the lead UN agency driving data for strengthened policies and decision-making within the UN system in Sri Lanka.

In order to ensure that no one is left behind, UNFPA plays a pivotal role in:
• Ensuring that demographic trends such as population ageing are highlighted at policy level to inform national and subnational decision making in Sri Lanka
• Providing technical support during all stages of a National census and helps ensure that data is widely utilized and disseminated for development
• Working with policymakers, civil society, healthcare providers and educators at all levels to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights.

56% of the total aged population in Sri Lanka are females
UNFPA is the lead United Nations agency driving Data for strengthened policies and decision-making in Sri Lanka.

Recognizing the crucial role Data plays in Sri Lanka’s journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Government of Sri Lanka and the United Nations, jointly organized #SDGDataLK: Enhancing Data for a Sustainable Sri Lanka - the First National Symposium on Data for the SDGs.

The symposium served as a National platform for enhancing the use of Data towards evidence-based policymaking and developing a sustainable Sri Lanka. The first step in this process is to establish the baseline Data for Sri Lanka, against the SDG indicators. This helps to understand where Sri Lanka currently stands in our shared journey towards achieving the SDGs by 2030, and in driving policies based on evidence towards achieving the 169 SDG targets and 17 SDGs.

Over 300 participants joined the 2-day symposium, representing the Government, UN Agencies, Private Sector, Civil Society Organizations, Academia, and Data and Research Organizations.

https://bit.ly/2RVdW2x
2007년 건강과 영양 연구아카데미는 17대 국정원장 첫 주요

2007년 건강과 영양 연구아카데미는 17대 국정원장 첫 주요

BY AJITH LIYANAGE

This article was originally published on

www.ivoice.lk - a trilingual online advocacy

platform supported by UNFPA Sri Lanka.
While ageing is a triumph of development that indicates Sri Lanka’s continuous investment in the wellbeing of its people, is Sri Lanka ready to face this rapid demographic transition?


Which aims to provide policy-level inputs to maximize the opportunity of population ageing with guest speakers from Japan and Malaysia.

The theme for the first dialogue was ‘Making Active Ageing a Reality’, with a focus on how population ageing must be addressed through an evidence-based approach, life-cycle approach, and rights-based approach.

UNFPA will continue this series of dialogues to provide inputs to strengthen policies and support the development and implementation of a holistic system to ensure Sri Lanka is prepared to maximize the opportunity of this demographic transition.

As revealed in the report, family size, whether small or large, is intertwined with reproductive rights, which are tied to many other rights such as health and education, adequate income, and the freedom to make choices. When people lack choice, it can have a long-term impact on fertility rates, often making them higher or lower than what most people desire. Where people can exercise their rights, they tend to thrive. Where these rights are stifled, people often fail to achieve their full potential, impeding economic and social progress.

When women and girls have access to quality healthcare, they are empowered to stay in school and to earn an income. When they are healthy, educated, and empowered, the next generation benefits. When the next generation thrives, society prospers.

This is how universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights contribute towards a progressive and sustainably developed Sri Lanka.